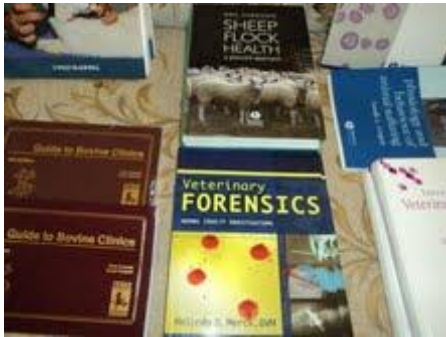


# MESOPOTAMIAN MINUTE

**- Current News on Agriculture & USDA in Iraq -**  
**Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad**  
Sunday, May 22, 2011



**Iraqi National Center for Youth Clubs 4-H** – On May 8th and 9th the Iraqi National Center for Youth Clubs 4-H held its first ever National 4-H Conference at the Al Sadeer Palace Hotel in Baghdad. The conference was attended by over fifty participants. On the first day of the conference, activities featured speakers who spoke about the benefits of 4-H, the history of 4-H in Iraq, and the duties of 4-H club officers. On the second day, workshops were held to plan the 4-H program's road map of activities for the upcoming year and create a strategy for raising funds to support the 4-H program. At the conclusion of the conference, all participants received a certificate for attending the conference.



**Tikrit University Received Veterinary Reference Books** – Multiple copies of modern, up to date English language veterinary reference books were provided through CERP to Tikrit University's College of Veterinary Medicine. The books will be catalogued and housed in the College's library for use by instructors and students. These books will replace decades old references. A similar trove of topic appropriate reference books and instruments were provided to the College of Agriculture at Tikrit University under the same CERP-funded purchase. Mr. Isaac Odisho, G-9 Ag advisor with USD-North, partnered with the PRT in carrying out this project.



**The Iraqi Red Meats Association Hosted its First Workshop**– The Iraqi Red Meats Association hosted its first 5-day workshop in Erbil on 15-19 May. The workshop was taught by two Iraqis who returned from an 8-week intensive training at the University of Illinois on all aspects of dairy management. They were assisted by University of Illinois professor, Jim Baltz. 40 farmers representing every province in Iraq attended the workshop. The workshop consisted of 4 days of didactic training, and one day of practical hands-on training at a local dairy farm. Videos of the 15 lectures given by the Iraqis can be found on the web at <http://www.youtube.com/user/uiucansci> or by Googling "dairy management Arabic." When asked what impact the IRMA program has had for the participating farmers, one replied: "It is as though we were blind, and you have made us to see."

**Pre-Import Inspection Requirement Looms** – The Iraqi Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control has appointed SGS and Bureau Veritas to implement a pre-import inspection, testing and certification program for all kinds of products from toys to automobiles and including food products. The pronounced goal for the adoption of such a measure is consumer protection and faster release of goods coming across borders into Iraq. This requirement if fully implemented by July 1, 2011 will result in increased prices for Iraqi consumers

**Personnel Update** - There are currently 27 USDA personnel in Iraq including those with Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), at Embassy Baghdad or embedded with U.S. military units. We didn't want to let him go, so it was with regret that we said farewell to Tim Lowery who served in country for close to two years and for much of the last year headed up the ePRT at Taji. Tim did yeoman's work and will be missed.

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